

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 SNM-05 TRSE-00 OES-07
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INRE-00 PA-01 H-01 SAB-02 /078 W
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O 211819Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3540
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA
USMISSION GENEVA

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GENEVA FOR USUNCND

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, PFOR, US, PN, SP
SUBJECT: SPANISH PRESS REPORTS ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF
AMBASSADOR TORRIJOS IN DRUG TRAFFICKING

1. SPANISH PRESS FEBRUARY 18 REPORTED STATEMENT BY
MOISES TORRIJOS, PANAMA'S AMBASSADOR TO SPAIN AND
BROTHER OF PRESIDENT OMAR TORRIJOS, WITH REGARD TO THE
AMBASSADOR'S ALLEGED CONNECTION WITH HEROIN TRAFFIC IN
THE U.S. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, AMBASSADOR TORRIJOS
SAID ACCUSATIONS AGAINST HIM HAD COME NOT FROM U.S.
GOVERNMENT, BUT FROM VARIOUS MEMBERS OF SENATE FOREIGN
RELATIONS COMMITTEE, INCLUDING SENATOR DOLE AND OTHER
"CONSERVATIVES" WHO ARE "NOSTALGICALLY OPPOSED TO RATI-
FICATION OF PANAMA CANAL TREATY."

2. AMBASSADOR TORRIJOS IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT
"DESPITE DENIALS BY JUSTICE AND STATE DEPARTMENTS" OF
HIS INVOLVEMENT IN DRUG TRAFFICKING, CERTAIN SENATORS
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ARE TRYING TO SUSPEND CONSIDERATION OF CANAL TREATY
TO STUDY ACCUSATIONS AGAINST HIM (PRIMARILY FROM EX-
NARCOTICS AGENT LELAND RIGGS) IN CLOSED SESSION.
TORRIJOS CHARACTERIZED ACCUSATIONS AS "PURE SLANDER"
AND SAID HIS ONLY CRIME WAS BEING "OLDER BROTHER OF THE
LEADER OF A COUNTRY OF ONE AND ONE-HALF MILLION PEOPLE
WHO IN EIGHT AND ONE-HALF YEARS OF REVOLUTIONARY

GOVERNMENT FORCED THE UNITED STATES TO SIT DOWN AT THE
NEGOTIATING TABLE TO NEGOTIATE AS EQUALS."

3. WITH REGARD TO THE FIFTY FILES ON THE "PANAMA
CONNECTION", TORRIJOS ADMITTED THAT THEY POSSIBLY
CONTAIN NAMES OF SOME PERSONS WHO HAD CONNECTION WITH
TORRIJOS FAMILY AND WHO ARE ALSO INVOLVED IN DRUG
TRAFFIC. FOR EXAMPLE, HE CITES CASE OF SON OF PANAMA'S
AMBASSADOR TO TAIWAN WHO "WAS DETAINED IN THIS AFFAIR",
WHICH CREATED A "SCANDAL".

4. IN SEPARATE REPORT FROM NEW YORK, SPANISH PRESS
QUOTES AIDE TO SENATOR DOLE TO EFFECT THAT SENATE COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES WILL DEFINITELY HOLD CLOSED
HEARINGS ON TORRIJOS CASE. ARTICLES CLAIM THAT NEW YORK
GRAND JURY ISSUED INDICTMENT AGAINST TORRIJOS IN 1972
AND THAT FEDERAL NARCOTICS AGENTS PLANNED TO ARREST HIM
IN DECEMBER 1972 DURING VISIT TO CANAL ZONE BUT HE WAS
WARNED THROUGH HIS BROTHER, PRESIDENT TORRIJOS, AND
AVOIDED ZONE. USG SOURCES ARE QUOTED TO EFFECT THAT
SOME FORTY TONS OF DRUGS ENTER U.S. ANNUALLY VIA PANAMA,
BUT THAT TRAFFIC HAS DIMINISHED SOMEWHAT DURING RECENT
YEARS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE
FOR REPLY TO INQUIRIES WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE FROM PRESS
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AND OTHER SOURCES. EMBASSY NOTES THAT AMBASSADOR TORRIJOS
HAS INFORMED THE SPANISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
THAT HE EXPECTS TO BE TRANSFERRED WITHIN THE NEAR FUTURE.
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Message Attributes

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